

MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 14

APRIL 8-14

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

PAUL E., DDP INVADE DIAL MANIA

NEW YORK---It was enough to give you an Excedrin headache.

Paul E. Dangerously and Diamond Dallas Page were guests Friday on MTV's DIAL MANIA BATTLE ROYAL, the hour-long program where viewers vote by phone for their favorite video.

At the end of the hour, Dangerously conked a masked Mr. X, who'd been clutching a Sting wrestling buddy, in the head with his phone and Page and Paul E. stomped him. Earlier in the week, Dangerously "resigned" from his WRESTLING HOTLINE slot in an angle reminiscent of his 1987 PRO WRESTLING THIS WEEK takeover.

LAWLER: REST FOR REAL AFTER MONDAY

MEMPHIS---After baiting fans on TV for three consecutive weeks, Jerry Lawler insists he is taking four weeks off after Monday's Pipkin Building match vs. Eric Embry.

On Saturday's WWC-TV show, Lawler's orthopedist, Dr. Alan Sammons, appeared to show X-rays of the USWA champion's neck. "While I would prefer you to stay off six weeks," said Sammons, "I'll settle for four."

Lawler defended his belt against the Texas title of Embry in a cage Monday night.

TITAN CLAIMS MORE THAN 800,000 BUYS

STAMFORD CT---The Titan Sports public relations machine is at it again.

Reports are surfacing in some broadcast/cable trade publications that Titan officials claim nearly 820,000 buys for WRESTLEMANIA VII. If that estimate were accurate, WM7 would have drawn a 6.1% buy-rate in unduplicated pay-cable homes (those which do not receive both VIEWER'S CHOICE and REQUEST TV).

But a MATWATCH check of three independent cable sources in the last week reconfirms the buy-rate for WM7 will fall at about 2.9%, or 390,000-395,000 homes, a gross of \$11.9 million.

Fourth and Goal Decision

SID RE-SIGNS WITH WCW: WAS IT WORTHWHILE?

It came at the eleventh hour and 59th minute. It was sealed amid sincere pessimism within the executive suite of World Championship Wrestling. But Sid Eudy has agreed to a new contract with WCW as Sid Vicious, which insiders estimate is close to the \$350,000 Eudy has been asking.

The deal was closed last Wednesday after a month in which Vicious made no secret of being openly courted by Titan Sports. The negotiations became fodder for wrestling radio talk shows and hardcore fans to debate the value to WCW of retaining Sid vs. the importance for Vince McMahon to wean him away.



WCW chief Jim Herd would not confirm specifics of the deal, other than to say, "We've kicked up the bonus we're offering to our top guys for pay-per-view shows and we hope that will be enough in the long run to keep him." But as late as last Tuesday afternoon, one WCW insider told me, "I'm convinced he's gone to Titan."

Questions raised by ring watchers revolve around several issues: 1)

did Vicious hold WCW hostage with the deal with his reported remarks about "having to check with Vince" about certain matters and what about his loyalty after WCW paid his medical bills and salary during his recovery from a punctured lung in early 1990?; 2) is he worth \$350,000?; 3) had he jumped, would this have forever sealed WCW as a farm system for Titan?; 4) was Sid really that pivotal to the future of both organizations?

I've talked to several people from within WCW (Herd is not included in this category in any remarks he's made to me) who are clearly irritated over the buildup to the signing. Said one: "This man's family never missed a paycheck while he was laid up. This company took care of him when a lot of places would have said, 'Sorry.' Now you understand why we have to take a close look at clauses concerning pay during injuries." In one respect, I agree. I firmly believe in loyalty and the company's care should have been reciprocal. But all one has to do is look at the realities of sports and entertainment figures in 1991 and it does not take a fool to realize it is a highest-bidder's world. I'm not suggesting that is always morally right. But it is a reality and the man does have the right to seek the best deal for himself.

As for the \$350,000 question, that's both a tangible and intangible one. On the surface, not a solitary performer for WCW is worth that kind of money, based on arena crowds. But wrestling is increasingly less of an arena business and the television and ancillary revenues are more important and Sid has tremendous personality charisma for those areas. The value of a Sid Vicious has to be measured over what the long-term plans are for his character and what the state of WCW over the next two years would have been without Vicious. The latter is an intangible. Some people have argued with me why \$350,000 for Sid and not for Ricky Steamboat two years ago. I can't answer that question.

Would Sid's jumping cemented WCW as Triple-A? One leading mainline wrestling journalist I cannot quote by name insists so but I am not sure you could

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STEVE BEVERLY

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point to any one personality to confirm that. The perception already exists with many crossover fans. True, Turner allowed the Road Warriors, Mark Callaway (The Undertaker) and Mike Rotunda as Michael Wallstreet to leave in the last ten months. But this is the same company which fought off a challenge for Ric Flair and successfully regained Barry Windham and Arn Anderson. And despite his obvious inexperience, El Gigante is no liability to WCW as a new character. Even with McMahon's thefts from WCW, Titan has the lowest WRESTLEMANIA buy-rate ever to show for it.

Would Sid have been that pivotal? There is no doubt he could have helped Vince but, then again, McMahon is trying to convince America there's still money in Sgt. Slaughter and The Iron Sheik. Figure that one. Had Sid gone to Titan, a Hogan-Vicious match probably would have been 18-24 months off, unless Vince would have gone to a fast build as he did with Hogan-Slaughter. That's now a moot question. Would it have killed WCW to lose him? Hurt, yes. Kill is far too relative a word.

As for the future: for charismatic purposes, a babyface Vicious, for which fans have clamored for more than a year, is the logical choice, in my view, as WCW's next world champion. He'll never be the interview Hulk Hogan is and his workrate is enough to make Hogan look like Flair. But he has the flavor with fans, particularly those in tougher Northeast buildings. How that will mesh with WCW hardcores who want the longer, action-style match is arguable. But with the money committed behind him, TBS almost has to try it. If it happens, let's just hope they don't stick him with another Black Scorpion.

MIKE, IT WAS LONG DISTANCE

It could have been the MATWATCH Big Bloop of the Year. But it wasn't deliberate.

Last December, this publication, like many others, reported on the death of former wrestler Mike Mazurki. Two weeks ago, MATWATCH amazingly brought Mazurki back to life.

In Chris Crosby's report on the Cauliflower Alley Club banquet, Terry Funk was quoted as telephoning Mazurki---to whom the evening was dedicated---to tell him how many friends he has. What we inadvertently omitted was Crosby's line that Funk was talking "as if he was phoning Mazurki in heaven."

We're embarrassed. As MATWATCHER Charles Russo said, "That must have been some long-distance call."

WM7: WHY BUY-RATES TOOK A TUMBLE

The elementary and immature thing would be to chortle and grin, chalking up a perilously low 2.8 per cent buy-rate for WRESTLEMANIA VII to Vince McMahon's stubbornness in foisting an offensive angle on America at a time when its attention was focused on life-or-death matters. But the failure of this show to click with cable subscribers has little to do with the main event. In fact, common sense makes it relatively simple.

As stated in MATWATCH the week of WRESTLEMANIA, mainline America basically shrugged its shoulders at the entire Hogan-Slaughter mess and when the NBC MAIN EVENT special in February drew only a 6.7 rating, it was clearly evident WM7 was not going to come close to being a blowaway show in cable buys.

We should have smelled trouble when a BROADCASTING magazine article surfaced four weeks before WM7 stating details of Titan Sports' test-market of a three-tiered pricing plan in separate cities for SUMMER SLAM. The show was marketed at \$20, \$25 and \$30 in different markets and, according to Titan officials, buys were inconsequential to pricing. Baloney.

Dr. Bill Cordell, a sociologist and researcher of consumer responses to pricing, backs up a personal theory. "If you study contemporary entertainment pricing, you find a significant increase in consumer resistance once the cost of an event exceeds \$20," says Dr. Cordell. "College football is a prime example. Even the most successful college programs are finding it harder to guarantee sellouts as ticket prices approach \$20 or greater. The game has to be of premium interest for a consumer to part with that much disposable income. You're going to find that increasingly true with pay-per-view events, whether it be wrestling or any other sporting event. The more pay events there are, the less special each individual one becomes. Viewers will be much more selective. Even a WRESTLEMANIA cannot guarantee record sales simply because it's WRESTLEMANIA."

If the response of MATWATCHers is any indication, \$30 was a major scareoff even if they were not boycotting the Iraqi angle. "I'm not giving anybody \$30 for a wrestling show," said George Groover of Fort Wayne IN. "I had six guys over and we ponied up \$5 each. No way I'm giving Vince or anybody else \$30." Mike Lamont of Perry FL adds: "I didn't buy WRESTLEMANIA because I didn't like the angle. But I wouldn't have paid that kind of money anyway. My personal budget won't allow it. At least, that's what my wife says."

As seen in THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES, Titan's public story will be of a WM7 which drew more than 800,000 buys. Of course, the Titan line has to be bigger and better than its compatriots, even those in boxing, and, sure enough, there will be those in the media who will buy into it without cross-checking. If SPORTS ILLUSTRATED is foolhardy enough to accept Titan's claims of more than 900,000 buys for past pay-cable shows, there's your answer.

Would a different topline have drawn better? Likely. Hogan-Slaughter was a match with little mystery as to its finish. But not even Hogan-Warrior in 1990 with its massive buildup could do better than a 3.8. As the pay-per-view universe continues to expand (it is expected to be at 20 million homes by the time of NBC's risky experiment of pay-per-view for the 1992 Summer Olympics at a \$120 package rate), buy-in percentages will continue to lower. Probably in today's universe, the premium buy-rate is a 4 for wrestling.

As we stated three weeks ago, as more mainline sporting events enter PPV, wrestling fans with crossover interests will pick and choose ring events more carefully. Just as Diane Mermigas of ELECTRONIC MEDIA told me three years ago when basic cable wrestling shows began slipping out of the quarterly cable ratings top ten: "I think you'll find the better the quality of original programming and sporting events are which come to cable, the greater the chance these wrestling shows will have less dominance." That, indeed, has happened. The 4-plus ratings of 1985 have eroded into mid-2s and occasional low 3s.

Pricing is going to be everything. Otherwise, Titan and Turner would not be plunging into the budget-priced pay-cable market with the WWF HISTORY OF WRESTLEMANIA and Turner's WCW/JAPAN SUPERSHOW. In 1991, wrestling has cooled to the point that one can't simply bill 14 matches and an average main event, even if it contains Hulk Hogan, and expect fans to shell out the cost of half-a-week's groceries. They like to eat too much.

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TV
TEMPO
April 1-7

(SOUTH ATLANTIC) - [2 Wks.

Ago]: Vince Torelli d. Jimmy White; Chris Chavis d.

Smasher Stone; Sam Houston d. Butch Malone; Tommy Seabolt d. Tommy Landell. BOMB.

[Last Week]: Seabolt d. Terry Thomas; (ANGLE) Seabolt tries to convince Torelli to become fan favorite but Vince walks away; American G.I. d. Jerry Powers; Fantastics d. Nazi Storm Trooper/Stone; Chavis d. Landell; (ANGLE) Seabolt confronts Torelli about attitude change. Torelli threatens Seabolt. RESTHOLD.

(UWF) - Steve Williams d. Capt. Bad; Afa d. Carmine Albanio; (CAPT. LOU'S CORNER) Bob Orton Jr.; Power Twins d. Tom Brandi/Chris Michaels; Bam Bam Bigelow draw vs. Orton. BOMB.

(PORTLAND) - Al Madril draw vs. C.W. Bergstrom; J.J. Funk d. Doug Masters by DQ; Scott Norton no decision vs. Rip Oliver when ref Sandy Barr decked & all wrestlers begin brawl; Mike Winner/Larry Oliver d. Grappler/Equalizer & Grap slaps Eq around ring after; Bart Sawyer d. Psycho Sam when Grappler runs in but Funk chases Grap & handcuffs Sam to ropes; (ANGLE) Norton refuses offer to join Wrecking Crew & shoves away Grappler; (ANGLE) Grappler chews out Equalizer for not wearing face paint on interview. DRAW-PLUS.

(NEW JAPAN WORLD PRO) - [3/16]: (CLIP) Tony Halme KOs Larry the Brain in 0:44 of second round; Hiroshi Hase/Kensuke Sasaki d. Shiro Kohsinaka/Takayuki Iizuka; Riki Choshu/Tatsumi Fujinami d. Big Van Vader/Super Strong Machine. RESTHOLD-PLUS. [3/23]: (STARRCADE) Keiji Mutoh d. Sting after blowing mist in Sting's face; (GREATEST 18 CLUB TITLE) Choshu d. Tiger Jeet Singh to keep title; (NWA/IWGP WORLD UNIFICATION MATCH) Fujinami d. Ric Flair to win (or not win) both belts. POWERSLAM.

(ALL JAPAN PRO) - [3/17]: (AJPW WORLD LT. HWT. TITLE) Masanobu Fuchi d. Joe Malenko to keep belt; (CLIP) Rocky Laukea vs. Yoshinari Ogawa; (AJPW WORLD TAG TITLE) Terry Gordy/Steve Williams d. Akira Taue/Jumbo Tsuruta to keep belts. POWERSLAM. [3/24]: Stan Hansen d. Dynamite Kid; Toshiaki Kawada d. Dan Kroffat; (6-MAN) Tsuruta/Taue/Fuchi d. Mitsuhara Misawa/Kenta Kobashi/Tsuyoshi Kikuchi. POWERSLAM.

(LUCHA LIBRE) - Aguila Solitaria/El Pantera II/Ciclón Ramirez d. Ulises/Master/Babe Richard 2 straight falls; Tony Arce/El Vulcano/La Bestia Salvaje d. Cesar Dantes/Apolo Dantes/El Antifaz 2-3; El Gran Markus Jr./El Hijo del Gladiador/El Médico Asesino Jr. d. El Dandy/Super Astro/Huracán Sevilla 2-3; Octagon/Pirata Morgan/Ringo Mendoza d. Fuerza Guerrera/El Satánico/Kung Fu 2-3; (RECAP) Clips of last 5 wks. POWERSLAM-PLUS.

(MTV: DIAL MANIA) - Paul E. Dangerously, Diamond Dallas Page guest. At show's end, Paul E. bashes masked Mr. X, he & DDP rip apart X's Sting buddy doll & stomp him. EXCEDRIN.

(LPWA) - Denise Storm d. Alma Alvarez; Nasty Girls d. Bambi/Malaya Hosaka; (NON-TITLE) Reggie Bennett d. Lady X; Queen's Court d. Susan Sexton/The Beast when Beast runs away with Norman after Queen steals Harvey the Rabbit; (LUMBERJACK MATCH) Terri Power d. Black Venus. DRAW.

(USWA/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Danny Davis d. Dog of War; [FIRST BLOOD MATCH] Gary Young d. Steve Austin by DQ when Texas

Hangmen run in until Billy Joe Travis/Davis save; [SOUTHERN TITLE] Tom Prichard d. Jeff Jarrett when Eric Embry bashes Jeff w. boot during ref bump; (6-MAN) Jarrett/Bill Dundee/Travis d. Embry/Prichard/Tojo Yamamoto. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[BEST OF CHAMPIONSHIP]: Davis d. Scorpion; Eddie Gilbert d. Sgt. O'Reilly but Embry/Prichard run in before Steve Keirn saves with 2x6; Travis/Jarrett d. Keith Roberson/Mickey Jay; Dundee d. Duce Mason; (REPLAY) Austin d. Dundee when J.C. Ice runs in; Texas Hangmen d. Freezer Thompson/T.D. Steel. RESTHOLD.

SCALE: PIMPALL - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Davey Boy Smith d. Jeff Sword; Bushwhackers d. Scott Allen/Jim Corbitt; Undertaker d. Randy Yates; Ricky Steamboat d. Keith Steinborn; Power & Glory d. Kevin Greenough/Mike Samples; Earthquake d. Shelton. RESTHOLD.

[SUPERSTARS]: Big Bossman d. Keith Steinborn; (UPDATE) Sgt. Slaughter burns Hulk Hogan; Rockers d. Sword/Pez Whatley; (VIDEO) Mike Rotunda as IRS agent; Curt Hennig d. Dale Wolfe; Jim Duggan d. Brooklyn Brawler; (FUNERAL PARLOR) Percy w. Undertaker; Jake Roberts d. John Allen; (ANGLE) Jake leaves ring as Earthquake announced. Jake chases Tenta/Jimmy Hart w. Damien; (REPLAY) Andre the Giant dips Bobby Heenan in grape vat & gives him crushing handshake; Ted DiBiase d. Reno Riggs. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(PRO WRESTLING '91) - (RETROSPECTIVE) PYTs winning Ga. tag team tourney; (From LPWA) Bennett d. Comrade Orga; (CLASSIC/WWC) Huracán Castillo Jr./Miguel Perez Jr. d. Mr. X/Astea; (INTL/Japan) Antonio Inoki vs. Fujiwara (Part 1). RESTHOLD.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - [6-MAN] Jimmy Snuka/Mike Rotunda/Pardee d. Larry Zbyszko/Buddy Rose/Doug Sommers; (PROFILE) Destruction Crew; Greg Gagne/Paul Diamond d. Destruction Crew; Gagne/Jim Brunzell d. Jerry Blackwell/Sheik Adnan al-Kaissie. DRAW.

(IWCCW) - Curly Moe d. The Savage; Vic Steamboat d. Hawaiian Hurricane; (REPLAY) Danny Spivey wins squash; Mad Dog Don Rock d. John Doe; Million \$ Babies d. Undertakers when Babies use golf club to win. BOMB-PLUS.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: McMahon/Heenan at Gold's Gym, Venice Beach CA; Mountie d. Koko B. Ware; Steamboat d. Brawler; Greg Valentine d. Dino Bravo; (ANGLE) Nasties try to choke weightlifter with barbells; DiBiase d. Pat Armstrong; (FEATURE) Rotunda as IRS agent; (GUEST) WWF lifter Mike Christian; Bushwhackers d. Black Bart/Joe Burton; Big Bossman d. Corbitt; (WM7) Hogan title victory celebration; Marty Jannetty d. Pat Tanaka; (REPLAY) Hogan burned by Slaughter after WM7; Hennig d. Riggins; (SEGMENT) Mean Gene w. Heenan replaying Andre the Giant dumping Heenan in grape vat. Andre sends Bobby to knees w. handshake; Barbarian d. Jim Brunzell; Kerry Von Erich d. Allen; (POSEDOWN) Christian embarrasses Heenan. RESTHOLD.

(USWA/WMC) - Gilbert d. O'Reilly; (FEATURE) Dr. Lee Sammons shows X-rays of Jerry Lawler's neck & orders him to take 4-6 weeks off; Embry/Prichard d. Ben Jordan/Todd Johnson but Tom tosses out ref Paul Heyman Sr. & Eric piledrives Johnson from top. Lawler demands final world vs. Texas titles cage match; (ARENA/TX TITLE) Embry d. Lawler by DQ when Jerry burns Eric; Hangmen d. Night Train Jackson/Jay; (ARENA/BOXING MATCH) Up-

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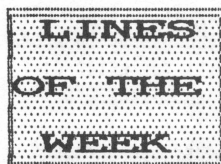
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town Bruno d. Ice by DQ when Austin runs in & Steve & Ice pound Bruno to juice until Dundee chairs Austin; Steve Keirn/Dundee d. Austin/El Grande Pistolero 2 straight. First fall DQ when Hangmen run in. Gilbert saves. Bill gets sleeper on Austin. J.C. runs in but Bruno decks J.C. RESTHOLD.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Dan Spivey d. Larry Santo; Sid Vicious d. Carl Robertson but Brian Pillman runs in, dropkicks Sid out; Steiners d. Lou Pabiano/Brian Carr; Ron Simmons d. Mike Thor but Butch Reed runs in after; (WNN) Gordon Solie w. Simmons-Reed pullapart from WCW PRO; Bobby Eaton vs. Terrence Taylor becomes Eaton/Tom Zenk vs. Taylor/Buddy Landell when Zenk & Landell show up at ringside. Eaton/Zenk d. Taylor/Landell; Young Pistols d. State Patrol. RESTHOLD-PLUS.
[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: Flair d. Maggs; Windham d. Joe Barrett; Pillman d. Thor; Pistols d. Tom Burke/Terry Bronson; Junkyard Dog d. Rick Stockhauser but Teddy Long/Kevin Sullivan run in & hold JYD for One Man Gang to 747 until Simmons saves; Dustin Rhodes/Ricky Morton d. Patrol; Taylor/Larry Zbyszko d. Zenk/Eaton by DQ when Bobby uses computer on Terry; Steiners d. Mark Kyle/Joe Cezana; (HANDICAP) Nikita Koloff d. Jim Boss/Dave Diamond; (ANGLE) Nikita/Lex Luger brawl to pullapart until Nikita decks Lex w. old U.S. belt & breaks belt on post; Gang d. Santo; El/Sting d. Vicious/Arn Anderson. DRAW-PLUS.
[MAIN EVENT]: Tommy Rich/Big Josh d. Pabiano/Pat Rose; (6-MAN) Rhodes/Pistols d. Magnum Force/Paul Lee; Vicious d. Randy Starr; Simmons d. Joe Cruz but Teddy Long/Kevin Sullivan run in & stretch out Ron for Gang to give three 747s; Windham d. Pillman by using trunks but Brian rallies to brawl twice w. Sid before El stops it; (ANGLE) Paul E. gives Missy an award by showing her getting booted out of W. WAR dressing room by Stan Hansen; (W. WAR) Itsuki Yamasaki/Mami Kitamura d. Miss A/Miki Handa. DRAW.

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]: JYD d. Jim Sexton; Sting/Luger d. Rip Rogers/Doug Vines; Vicious d. Starr; (SEGMENT) Grizzly Smith announces U.S. tag belts vacated & top 2 teams will play off at SUPERBRAWL; {VIDEO} Koloff workout; (REPLAY) Taylor d. Zenk when Pee Wee doesn't see Tom's foot on rope; (LARRY Z'S LEG-ENDS) Gigante guests. Sid brings out gurney. El says his hand rules world; (REPLAY) Koloff decks Luger w. belt; Windham d. Pillman by holding tight but Brian brawls w. Barry twice after until El stops it; Simmons d. Cruz but as Sullivan baits Ron, Long/Kevin stretch out Ron for three 747s. DRAW.
[WORLD WIDE]: Vicious/Hansen d. Keith Hart/David Isley; Rhodes d. Thor; Rick Steiner d. John Douglas; Owen Hart d. Rogers; El/Morton d. Flair/Windham by DQ when Vicious runs in before Big Josh chases heels w. axhandle. El had replaced Rich who had been "injured;" Zenk d. Hacksaw Higgins. DRAW.



1. Paul E. Dangerously, MTV: "I am the most controversial man on MTV since Andrew Dice Clay." 2. Don Coss, PORTLAND, on Buddy Rose sitting in flea market dunk tank: "Buddy Rose IS a dunk tank." 3. Paul E./Jim Ross, PH, on Tony Gilliam: (PE) "The ugliest ring announcer in the world." (JR)

"He's using that Stridex stuff on his face now. He's gonna be all right." (PE) "Proof positive that Dr. Frankenstein did complete at least one experiment." 4. Mr. Fuji, WWF-SU: "Me and my Orient Express do not like rock & roll. We like cham-

ber music...torture chamber music." 5. Randy Savage, WWF-SU, to Roddy Piper: "You're putting me over but are you being sincere?" 6. Lightning Kid, SATURDAY NIGHT AT RINGSIDE, on Jerry Lynn's bandage from Kid's fire: "Who was that? The Invisible Man? What was that on his face...a maxi-pad?" 7. Paul E., PH, on Steiners: "These guys have got more gold around their neck than Mr. T." 8. Ross, PH, on Rick Steiner missing first of 2 elbows: "One out of two---the Braves would take a .500 hitter." 9. Savage, WWF-SU: "There's a short clothesline... exact opposite of a long clothesline." 10. Gordon Solie, WWW: "I hope Dustin lets these comments (by Hansen) roll off like water off a duck's back."

11. Diamond Dallas Page, WCW PRO: "Everybody's entitled to be stupid once in a while but Brian Pillman abuses the privilege." 12. Eddie Gilbert, WWC: "I didn't turn good. My opponents just changed." 13. Solie, WWW, on Rick Steiner: "He almost pulled a Van Gogh when he nearly took off that guy's ear." 14. Paul E., WCW: "Missy Hyatt's latest boyfriend is so young, he says, 'Hey, Missy, what's it like to have your own driver's license?'" 15. Paul E., WCW, on inverted atomic drop: "That'll take the bass right out of your voice."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Mick Karch, SNR, on Verne Gagne's remarks about Bruiser Brody: "One, Bruiser Brody did NOT get what he deserved and, two, his enemies did NOT finally catch up with him. Bruiser Brody's death was a tragic loss for pro wrestling." 2. Ross, PH, on Sid's helicopter move: "Maybe we ought to call that move the Eastern Airlines because it goes down, too." 3. Lightning Kid, SNR: "I have to admit I'm sorry for burning Lynn. I'm sorry the guy can still walk." 4. Ross/Paul E., PH, on Ross's date for a Hawks game: (PE) "I'll bet it's Missy Hyatt." (JR) "I bet it's not. I'm too tall for her. She likes shorter guys." 5. Paul E., WCW: "It's nice to see Missy kissed by someone closer to her own age."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Larry Zbyszko, WCW PRO, to El Gigante: "How's Grandpa, Lily and Eddie (Munster) doing?" 2. Paul E., MTV, on Mariah Carey: "Doesn't she want to be a Diamond Doll?"

BEST PICTURES - 1. MTV, Paul E. bashing Mr. X with phone. 2. PTW, Heenan on exercycle. 3. PTW, Andre stepping on Heenan's hand. 4. PH, Sid tossing Tony Gilliam out of chair. 5. USWA, Michael St. John sitting w. little girl eating cotton candy. 6. WCW PRO, Windham-Pillman brawl. 7. WWW, El towering over Tony Schiavone. 8. WCW, Sid/El staredown. 9. PORTLAND, Norton-Oliver post-match. 10. WWC, Lawler burning Embry.

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. LEGION OF DUMMIES (Brian Knobbs on L.O.D.). 2. EASTERN AIRLINES (Ross on Sid's helicopter). 3. BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (Piper on Sherri Martel).

SEXIST REMARK OF THE WEEK - Paul E., MTV, on Mariah Carey: "I don't know why we have to have a broad on MTV."

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - WWF, Roberts-Earthquake angle going outside TV lights. Rare, rare situation when lights don't follow complete action and part of this was VERY dark.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Paul E., PH, on Spivey: "The cliché line of the week---he don't work by the hour." 2. Piper, WWF-SU, on Roberts: "He don't get paid by the hour." 3. Solie, WNN: "...wild and wooly." 4. St. John, USWA: "...time will tell." 5. St. John, WWC, on Embry being burned: "There's fire in his eyes." 6. Paul E., WCW: "...discretion is the better part of valor."

STARS & STRIPES: Vince's going to John Philip Sousa for the SUPERSTARS theme has roots. For nearly 20 years, "The Stars & Stripes Forever" was the theme of LIVE ATLANTA WRESTLING with Ed Capral.

INFLATION AGAIN: Titan claiming 65,000 attended their SWS Japan joint show but we're told of 42,000 in the building, less than 20,000 were paid.

PLEABAG BUDDY: Don Coss's line (see LINES OF THE WEEK) was prompted by a Portland plug for Buddy Rose's appearance at Sandy Barr's flea market.

PRE-EMPTIONS: ESPN pre-empted USWA SUPERCARD April 1 and aired an opening day major league baseball game in its place Monday. Think that's bad? In Japan, NEW JAPAN PRO has will be bumped Saturday for the third straight week by golf.

THE MORNING SHOW: ALL JAPAN has been shoved to a 1:30 a.m. slot and it's showing. The rating for the March 31 episode was only 1.8 on the Japanese index but drew a 65 share.

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: In addition to the Lawler-Embry world vs. Texas title match (see page 1), Tom Prichard defended the Southern title in a cage vs. Jeff Jarrett and Eddie Gilbert/Steve Keirn went after the Texas Hangmen's USWA tag belts.

A SMALLER CARD: The move to the Pipkin Building has shortened the Memphis cards. Only six matches this week with a Steve Austin/J.C. Ice vs. Bill Dundee/Uptown Bruno tag match trailing the card. In Evansville, USWA has seven bouts but some of the guys are going two and three times.

THE NEW NAME: Nothing spectacular but by the May sweeps, WCW's new name will be WCW SATURDAY NIGHT. Jim Ross was using it in interviews Monday night at Center Stage.

ALSO AT CENTER STAGE: A Dustin Rhodes-Larry Zbyszko match sees Terrence Taylor and Ricky Morton get involved to set up a tag match between the four.

HEROES & FRIENDS: That's the name of Dusty's new interview segment. Monday night, he taped his first face-to-face seg with Ric Flair.

A ROUGH ONE: The Center Stage crowd saw a Ric Flair-Brian Pillman slugout. Flair juiced from the chest. El Gigante and Arn Anderson also get involved.

THE SPLIT WIDENS: In a DANGER ZONE, Paul E. interviews Flair with Barry and Arn alongside. Flair says if he's challenged by the fellow Horsemen, he'll take care of them just like his other challengers. When Paul asks Ric about it a second time, Flair calls Paul "Helen Keller." Arn and Barry remove their sunglasses at that point and step a bit further aside. Sid Vicious was not at the Monday taping.

A BAD ONE: A One Man Gang-Tommy Rich match was taped which does absolutely nothing for Tommy.

BASEBALL BLUES: The Braves begin their annual damage on the TBS wrestling schedule April 20. WCW shortens to an hour that night but the two-hour WCW MAIN EVENT airs on the 28th.

THREE MEN IN A BOOTH: I hear the PRO WRESTLING '91 shows starting April 20 have enough lines of the week Craig (Tragic) Johnson and Scott Hudson may retire the category.

SPLITS AND SPARES: The Blazers have split up as a GEORGIA ALL-STAR team, so R.D. Swain has joined forces with John Michaels. They're having a NAME THAT TEAM contest.

NEW FACES: Expect Scotty the Body and Doug Sommers to begin working for GAS at the late April tapings. Both are moving to Atlanta.

HONEST ABE: Billy Black is now being managed by Honest Abe Lincoln, who Hudson says could be the late President's twin. Also, a Steve Lawler-Joel Deaton feud over the Georgia title should erupt shortly.

POWER SLAM: Terri Power said to be mending fine from her injury in Portland and should be back in time for the next LPWA taping.

TAPE LINE: Speaking of LPWA, the group is negotiating for a line of videos which could be in stores as early as mid-May.

CHURNIN' CHARLIE: My own station, WBBJ-TV, will be debuting SATURDAY NIGHT WRESTLING PARTY in May with Churnin' Charlie Davis, a local deejay at Tremors nightclub, as the host.

MOTOR CITY MADNESS: A crowd of 518 turned out for a Motor City Wrestling taping March 30. Man Mountain Lancaster retained the Midwest title over White Lightning and the Nightmares kept the Motor City U.S. tag belts over Big Rick O'Toole and Charlie Fulton.

A FATALITY: TEXAS ROUNDUP is folding and I, for one, am sorry to see it go. Though results-oriented, it offered the insight of an active, albeit anonymous, wrestler.

SUMMER CONFAB: Diane Devine's summer mid-July fans gathering will be headquartered at the O'Hare Plaza in Chicago. Rates are \$55 a night (1-4 persons). The sked is still being developed but a Windy City show will be included, along with a July 19 card at a Wisconsin fair and a July 20 show at Chicago. For more details, write Diane, one of the truly nice people, at 4150 E. Iowa Ave. #406, Denver CO 80222-3735.

ANOTHER INDIE: Denver-based IWA promoter Tom Shade has an April 27 card in Colby KS with Honky Tonk Man vs. B. Brian Blair and Rick Rude-Paul Orndorff being billed. Titan Sports' lawyers reportedly contacted Shade but he's already used Honky and Rude at a show at Great Lakes Naval Base.

THE BOOGEYMAN: Chas Taylor---son of a Houston promoter---has debuted for USWA as Boogey in a ninja outfit. He'll be on TV in a six-man tag, with Steve Austin and Steven Dane against Billy Travis/Danny Davis/Gary Young.

TEXAS SHOOTOUT: About the sixth indie Texas group was to debut last Monday in Garland TX. Sweet Daddy Falcone vs. California Stud was to be the main event.

MATWATCH 1990 ANNUAL

About 15 copies of the MATWATCH 1990 ANNUAL remain. The 92-page yearbook is available at \$12 (U.S./CANADA RATE) and \$20 (OVERSEAS). Check, cash or money order to: MATWATCH, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.

MATWATCH

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I Remember...

LEN ROSSI: SEARCH FOR YESTERDAY

BRENTWOOD TN---His name is legend to veteran fans in Alabama and Tennessee. At one point, wrestling magazines in the 1960s even speculated he was Mr. Wrestling (before Tim Woods removed the hood). Like many grapplers of the 1950s and '60s, his son followed him into the ring.

Len Rossi doesn't see much TV wrestling today but he keeps in touch enough to know the current state of the industry. Three weeks ago in a telephone conversation, Rossi reflected on the changes in the ring since his retirement more than a decade ago.

"What little I watch has little art or science. I think what they've done is get in a position where they can't top themselves."

---LEN ROSSI

"I don't begrudge anyone the money or the exposure they get today," says Rossi. "It's a big merchandising project. But I think what they've done is get in a position where they can't top themselves. These things run in cycles and I

think we're very much on a downside of the cycle."

Rossi doesn't catch much on the tube since getting into the health food business. "There's always been showmanship. But what little I watch now has little art or science."

Living in a Nashville suburb of Brentwood TN, Rossi and his son Joe, also a former wrestler, are lobbyists for the wholistic approach to health, controversial in many medical circles. Joe does a weekly health radio show in Nashville. Rossi has plunged heavily into his business and his grandchildren since the untimely death of his wife seven months ago.

But Rossi is trying to reach the wrestling community for a bit of memorabilia. "In 1981, we had a bad house fire that virtually wiped us out," said Rossi. "We had a big stack of wrestling films of my years in the ring and everything was destroyed." Rossi is interested in hearing with anyone who may have any 35 mm or 16 mm film or videotape of his matches.

"My grandchildren see wrestling on TV and they find it fascinating that Grandpa used to do that," said Rossi. "I'd like to have something to show them."

Anyone who may be able to assist Rossi in his search may contact him at the following address:

LEN ROSSI HEALTH FOOD & CARE CENTER
P.O. BOX 681
BRENTWOOD TN 37027

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RATINGS RAP

PTW TAKES

TOP SPOT

Boosted by an appearance from Hulk Hogan in its Gold's Gym remote, WWF PRIME TIME WRESTLING returned to the top spot in the Nielsen cable ratings for the week ending April 2.

PTW, in the second week of its new Tuesday night slot, scored a 2.8 rating and 4.6 percent share of audience to nudge out the two TBS afternoon series. But PRIME TIME was off 13% from its post-WRESTLEMANIA numbers.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING and WCW MAIN EVENT both tied for second at 2.6, each falling slightly from the previous week. ALL-AMERICAN took the biggest plunge, down 24% from its hot 3.3 of a week ago.

POWER HOUR was down 5% but still drew over a million homes.

CABLE

Week Ending April 2	Rating	Share	Total Homes
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 4/2)	2.8	4.6	1.55 million
WCW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 3/30)	2.6	5.5	1.47 million
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 3/31)	2.6	6.4	1.47 million
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 3/31)	2.5	8.2	1.39 million
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 3/30)	1.9	6.8	1.08 million

TUBE TALK

Double duty again over the weekend, guesting on THE LARRY KATZ SHOW in Baltimore and with Jody MacDonald and Rich Mancuso on WFAN in New York Saturday....Lots of disputes over the UWF taping skedded for Florida at Universal Studios. Eddy Mansfield reportedly considering legal action against Herb Abrams as he thought he had a deal with Universal to tape PWF....I'd appreciate it if anyone could provide a dub of WCW/New Japan Supershow. It will not be offered here. I'll swap a fresh tape....Also, a MATWATCHer offered a gift 1990 ANNUAL to Des Devlin in Jackson Heights NY. Well, Des' annual came back to me, so if the giftee would be in touch, I'd be beholding... Next week, we will offer a double issue, which will include info on the semi-important announcement I had teased three weeks back. I am going to take some time off to visit family two weeks hence and after reading the issue, you'll hopefully understand why I need the break. Have a great week!

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